THE PRESENT **CONDITION OF INDIA**

I hope that you have tried to read imaginatively the facts and figures I have given and to clothe them with the starved flesh and anaemic blood which they represent. Try to conceive a proud people of ancient lineage humbled to the dust and perhaps you will understand the feelings which have led to terrorism. The reprisals taken against this admittedly reprehensible form of political activity have to a great extent ruined a whole generation or more in Bengal physically and often mentally.

With the possible exception of China, it is doubtful whether there is anywhere in the world where men and women suffer so much as in India. When we compare the conditions of the workers in England to those in Russia to the disadvantage of the latter, we forget that the Empire includes India. The comparison then will be rather different.

England is full of pacifists who are prepared to go to any lengths rather than to draw the sword in defence of international order, but they acquiesce in the prosperity and security which the possession of the Empire gives them, yet it was gained by force and held by force. Those who rightly protest against the bombing of civilians in Barcelona or in the towns of China should remember that Lord Londonderry confessed after the Disarmament Conference that he had had the greatest difficulty in preserving the use of the bombing aeroplane *"even* on the North-West Frontier."

The continuance of a backward and enslaved India gives the He to our ideal of a "Commonwealth of Nations" under the Crown. Even the conceding of self-government will not satisfy India, when her nationals find that their status in other parts of the Empire is steadily deteriorating. How can India desire to remain within the Commonwealth when her citizens are treated as outcastes in South Africa and subjected to all manner of indignities in Fiji or Mauritius? (Cf. C. F. Andrews, *India and the Pacific,* and the